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SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

PUBLICATIONS POLICY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The draft report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on United Nations Publications Policy, contained in the annex hereto is intended to respond to the policy and programmatic issues raised by the Assembly in its resolutions 46/185 B, section VI, entitled "Publications policy", and 47/73 B entitled "United Nations public information policies and activities" adopted on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee and the Special Political Committee, respectively.

2. Prepared under the auspices of the interdepartmental United Nations Publications Board, the draft report summarizes the publications policies and practices of the Organization and presents the findings and recommendations arising from their review, taking into account the decision to transfer responsibility for the planning and implementation of the publications programme from the Office of Conference Services to the Department of Public Information.

3. The process of consolidating publishing functions within the Department of Public Information commenced with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 47/212 of 23 December 1992, in which it approved the transfer of the secretariat of the Publications Board to the Department of Public Information in the context of the revised budgetary estimates for the biennium 1992-1993. The second round of revised estimates, reported to the General Assembly at its resumed forty-seventh session in document A/C.5/47/88, outlined the transfer of additional publishing functions, and the corresponding resources, to the Department.

4. The draft report of the Secretary-General is being submitted herewith for review by the Committee on Information and the Committee on Conferences at their 1993 sessions, in accordance with their respective mandates and in view of the interrelationship between the programmatic and technical issues raised therein.

Annex

PUBLICATIONS POLICY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Preliminary report

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INTRODUCTION

1. In section VI of its resolution 46/185 B, entitled "Publications policy", the General Assembly:

(a) Noted that in a number of sections of the proposed programme budget, notably in parts IV, V, VI, VII and VIII, there seemed to be a large number of publications and an unclear distinction between publications requested by intergovernmental bodies and technical publications produced at the initiative of the Secretariat;

(b) Also noted that the quality and relevance of publications appeared to be uneven and that the policies for pricing and distribution of United Nations publications needed to be further refined;

(c) Endorsed the recommendations contained in paragraphs 27 and 32.16 to 32.19 of the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 1/ and emphasized the need for the Secretariat to better utilize internal printing facilities with a view to reducing the overall cost of printing;

(d) Requested the Secretary-General to review the overall publications policy of the Organization, including its technical aspects and possible coordination at the level of the system, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

2. In a related decision, the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 47/73 B, adopted on the recommendation of the Special Political Committee and of the Committee on Information at its fourteenth session, requested the Secretary-General:

> "to direct the Publications Board to develop criteria and review all publications and proposals for publications to ensure, inter alia, that each publication fulfils an identifiable mandate and need, is timely, does not duplicate other publications inside or outside the United Nations system, and is cost-effective, and that before the publication is printed, it satisfies the criteria on the basis of which it was authorized".

3. At its 1992 substantive session, the Committee on Conferences approved the proposed outline for the study requested in resolution 46/185 B as contained in document A/AC.172/1992/CRP.1. In its report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session in document A/47/32, the Committee stressed that the report requested by the Assembly in its resolution 46/185 B, section VI,

> "should be analytical in nature and should present a critical assessment of the publications policies and practices, including identifications of possible duplications, or contradictions between instructions. In addition, the report could elaborate on present or proposed control mechanisms that could assist in evaluating both the impact of publications and the extent to which the publications meet their stated objectives."

4. In accordance with the request of the General Assembly and taking into account the views expressed by the Committee on Conferences and the Committee on Information, a review of the publications policy of the Organization has been carried out under the direction of the Publications Board. The findings and recommendations of that review are contained in the present report.

I. PUBLICATIONS POLICY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

A. Definition of publications

5. A United Nations publication has been defined as any written material issued by or for the United Nations under the authority of the Publications Board. Such publications, which are often offered for sale, include major studies, reports, statistical compilations and proceedings of certain conferences, seminars and symposia, as well as serial publications such as yearbooks, official records of the principal organs of the United Nations, the United Nations Treaty Series and technical journals and bulletins. The readership of United Nations publications thus ranges widely, covering, for example, development planners, statisticians, demographers, energy and water specialists and development assistance personnel. Although it is not their primary objective, some publications may also be of interest to the general public.

6. The publications programme for 1990-1991 comprised a total of approximately 1,000 titles annually with print runs ranging from 50 to 9,000 copies; of these, about 400 were sales publications. The publications were classified in the following three major categories:

(a) The official records of the principal organs of the United Nations and other proceedings and reports of conferences, meetings or symposia;

(b) Recurrent publications, such as yearbooks, annual reports, periodicals and numbered monographs or monograph series;

(c) Studies, reports or monographs.

7. In its 1984 report entitled "Publications policy and practice in the United Nations system", 2/ the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), noted that official records, proceedings of conferences, meetings and symposia and texts of conventions, codes and treaties were special to the United Nations system and would not qualify as "books" in the outside publishing world. JIU recommended that such materials be considered "documents" rather than publications, unless they had an identified sales constituency or were reproduced in a form that made them a saleable commodity to an identified readership. The recommendation of JIU, while reflecting correctly the special characteristics of the United Nations publications programme, is considered unduly restrictive; a United Nations publication may be of value to a wide readership yet still more appropriately distributed free of charge than issued as a sales item. However, in order to establish a clearer distinction between parliamentary documentation and publications, consideration is being given to removing official records of the principal organs of the United Nations from the publications programme, with the management of their production as well as technical processing

responsibility remaining with the Office of Conference Services. The Secretary-General is reviewing the administrative and budgetary implications of this proposal.

8. With the exception of the Yearbook of the United Nations and the UN Chronicle, unless such materials were specifically proposed for inclusion in the submission to the Publications Board, the publications programme has not included public information materials, documents other than official records produced for, or emanating from, the principal organs of the United Nations or their subsidiary bodies, or reports and studies prepared as part of technical cooperation projects. This will continue to be the general policy. However, on the basis of the review, it has been determined that certain kinds of public information materials, in addition to the Yearbook and the UN Chronicle, such as monthly, quarterly and annual publications, as well as mandated monographs, should be subject to a similar review by the Publications Board.

9. In addition, given the rapid advances in technology, it has become clear that the term "publications" should cover both printed matter (books, pamphlets, brochures, wall charts, posters, etc.) and "non-print" materials, including the reproduction and dissemination of written materials in machine-readable form, such as CD-ROM. Consideration is being given to including such non-print materials in the publications programme of the Organization.

B. Mandate for United Nations publications

10. Publications are included in the programme budget in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which were approved by the General Assembly in its resolutions 37/234 and 38/227. Under the Rules, legislative mandates for publications are provided by requests and directives to the Secretary-General contained in resolutions and decisions of United Nations intergovernmental bodies; the specificity of such mandates varies among programmes, depending upon the working methods of the legislative bodies concerned, and may in some cases consist of legislation establishing an organizational unit or providing a general mandate for its work. In addition, under the provisions of programme planning rule 103.2, the adoption of the medium-term plan provides a legislative mandate to new activities proposed by the Secretary-General in fulfilment of a general objective of the Organization.

11. Under the programme planning Regulations, legislative mandates are subject to review every five years. Some publications, however, have continuing mandates. The United Nations Treaty Series, for example, is mandated by Article 102 of the Charter, which provides that every treaty and every international agreement entered into by any Member of the United Nations shall be registered with and published by the Secretariat. The publication of official records is generally provided for in the rules of procedure of the main organs of the United Nations.

12. The review of mandates for publications is an established part of the programme budgeting process and, within the Secretariat, includes a review of all proposals for inclusion in the publications programme of the Organization by an interdepartmental Publications Board of senior officials, established by the

Secretary-General, in addition to the review of the programme budget proposals by the Programme Planning and Budget Division. Furthermore, programme budget proposals are often drawn up in consultation with legislative bodies in their respective fields of competence.

13. The Committee for Programme and Coordination has the primary responsibility for determining whether proposed programme activities fulfil legislative mandates, as well as for ensuring that programme activities do not duplicate other activities inside or outside the Organization. In its resolution 38/32 E, the General Assembly requested the Committee to review recurrent publications in the context of the medium-term plan or the programme budget. The General Assembly also requested that, as appropriate, in the conduct of their reviews of the recurrent publications they authorize for issuance, intergovernmental bodies should bear in mind the following criteria:

(a) Usefulness to the end-user of the publication as gauged from end-user response or from the sales record of a publication;

(b) Filling of a need;

(c) High standard of analysis or data;

(d) Promotion of the principles and purposes of the Organization;

(e) Continued validity of the original mandate;

(f) Recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in its report on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system, if applicable.

14. The regular and systematic review by intergovernmental bodies of the recurrent publications for which they are responsible would serve to ensure that such publications have valid mandates and meet the criteria set out by the General Assembly. The practice of the Statistical Commission might provide an appropriate model for other bodies.

15. In reviewing mandates for publications, the extent to which information provided by United Nations publications is available from other sources should be taken into account. It is not intended that United Nations publications simply reproduce information already widely available to Member States.

1. Criteria

16. The criteria to be applied by the Secretariat in approving materials for publication have been revised on the basis of the review and will be promulgated in an appropriate administrative instruction. In order to be issued as a publication of the United Nations, materials should:

(a) Promote the principles and purposes of the United Nations;

(b) Contribute directly to the achievement of one or more of the programme budget objectives of the subprogramme under which it is prepared;

(c) Be timely;

(d) Respond to an identified demand from a clearly defined target readership;

(e) Reach a standard of intellectual endeavour that reflects credit on the United Nations;

(f) Be prepared in a clear and concise style appropriate to the readership for which the publication is intended;

(g) Not substantially duplicate material that has already been published and is readily available.

There should be a reasonable expectation of positive advantage to the United Nations in terms of greater public awareness of the work of the Organization or of providing practical assistance to the membership of the Organization, such as by the publication of technical manuals or handbooks. The prospect of sales revenue would be a positive, although not a determining factor in the selection of materials for publication.

2. Application of criteria

17. Author departments are assigned the primary responsibility for ensuring that the above criteria are met. To meet their responsibility for ensuring that their publications meet the criteria established by the Publications Board, author departments are encouraged to establish arrangements for the systematic review of their publications, both at the proposal stage and in draft. In addition, the criteria are to be used by author departments in the evaluation of their publications, to ensure that the objectives to be achieved by their publication are met.

18. These criteria are to be applied to all publications as defined above, at successive stages in the preparation of publications from the initial selection of proposals to be included in the publications programme through drafting, editing, and preparation of the final form of the publication. They will also be used as the basis for ex-post-facto reviews and evaluations of publications by the Publications Board or its subsidiary bodies, by author departments or by other units responsible for programme evaluation.

19. At United Nations Headquarters, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/73 B, the Publications Board is considering ways to introduce new mechanisms (such as a Reading or Selection Committee) and/or procedures to improve the process of reviewing manuscripts to ensure that publications fulfil identifiable mandates and meet the criteria for publication. Whenever appropriate, encouragement would be given to the publication of inter-disciplinary works, prepared through cooperation among several departments or offices, including cooperation among several organizations in the United Nations system.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLICATIONS POLICY

A. Role of the Publications Board and its working committee and working groups

20. In accordance with rules 110.38 and 110.39 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has established an interdepartmental Publications Board comprising representatives of author departments and processing services. The functions and composition of the Board are at present under review in the context of the restructuring of the Secretariat, but its present functions are as follows:

(a) To determine the policies governing the preparation, production, distribution and sale of documents;

(b) To coordinate the planning and supervise the execution of the publications programme, the preparation of the estimates for contractual printing and the use of funds;

(c) To regulate the use of internal reproduction capacity with a view to ensuring maximum economy and efficiency.

The Board reports to the Secretary-General and makes such recommendations as it deems necessary. It also issues directives and regulations on behalf of the Secretary-General on publication policies and practices. The Board is assisted by a working committee at Headquarters and by working groups at Geneva and Vienna.

B. Role of the Department of Public Information

21. The Department of Public Information is responsible for the creation and preparation of materials designed to provide the media and the general public with current information about the United Nations and its objectives and activities. The Department also has recently been given primary responsibility for the planning and management of the publications programme of the United Nations, using external or internal services as appropriate, and for providing graphic presentation and cartographic services.

C. Role of the Programme Planning and Budget Division

22. The publications programme of the United Nations is an integral part of the programme budget. The Programme Planning and Budget Division provides support to the Committee for Programme and Coordination in ensuring adherence to the objectives of the medium-term plan and to the priorities established by the legislative bodies and in monitoring implementation and delivery of the publications programme.

D. Role of author departments

23. Within the Secretariat, the decision on the content and format of a publication is that of the substantive author department or office. Author

departments are responsible for the formulation of their own publication programmes on the basis of mandates from the relevant intergovernmental bodies and for the inclusion in the programme budget proposals of provisions for the staff and other resources necessary to prepare the materials to be published. They are also responsible for the substantive content and quality of their manuscripts (or camera-ready page mechanicals, if they use desktop publishing procedures) and for the timely submission of manuscripts for publication. The head of each department or office is also responsible for adherence to the policies and regulations promulgated by the Publications Board.

E. Role of the Office of Conference Services

24. While its primary responsibility is the processing of parliamentary documentation, the Office of Conference Services provides a variety of services related to the processing and distribution of publications, including editing, translation, copy preparation, proofreading, typesetting, reproduction, binding and distribution.

F. Role of the Office of General Services

25. The Office of General Services has recently been given responsibility for arranging for external printing services required for United Nations publications and for the sale of United Nations publications and the operation of the United Nations bookshop in New York.

III. COORDINATION

A. Coordination with other duty stations

26. Coordination with the United Nations Office at Geneva and with the United Nations Office at Vienna is achieved through working groups of the Publications Board established at each of those duty stations and, in the case of the United Nations Office at Geneva, also through the activities of sales offices. Correspondence and occasional exchanges of visits are used to coordinate policies and activities with regional commissions and other offices away from Headquarters.

B. Coordination with other United Nations system organizations

27. The Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) was established to coordinate the publications policies and practices of the organizations of the United Nations system; its organization and operation are now under review as part of the more general review of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies as well as other inter-agency bodies. Meetings of sales officers representing United Nations system organizations at international book fairs also contribute to the coordination of activities relating to the production and distribution of sales publications. Coordination with other United Nations system organizations is also facilitated by the work of the inter-agency Advisory Committee for the

Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS), which recently published the first edition of Books in Print of the United Nations system, listing over 14,000 titles available from all United Nations organizations.

IV. PREPARATION OF PUBLICATIONS

28. In its decision 45/451, entitled "Printing requirements of the United Nations", the General Assembly recommended that:

> "the current policies and practices of the United Nations should be continued so that maximum use would be made of internal printing capacities established to meet peak requirements for the production of parliamentary documentation at major conference centres, including the regional commissions, and that use of external printing services should be carefully controlled so as to ensure that such services would be procured on the most economic and efficient basis".

The printing plants at United Nations Headquarters, at the United Nations Office at Geneva and at the regional commissions have equipment and skilled staff capable of producing almost all United Nations publications, although sometimes external contract services are needed if the publication has specialized requirements or must be produced within short deadlines. The arrangements for printing at Headquarters are presently under review to ensure that the objectives of the above decision of the General Assembly are being met. The responsibility for procurement of external printing services has been transferred to the Office of General Services to be carried out as an integral part of the work of the Commercial, Purchase and Transportation Service.

V. DISSEMINATION OF PUBLICATIONS

A. Free distribution

29. Publications are distributed free of charge in accordance with general distribution policies set by the Publications Board and, where applicable, after consultation with the originating and/or responsible departments or offices, by surface mail or diplomatic pouch to ministries, embassies and other government addressees; intergovernmental organizations; non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status; specialized agencies; the regional commissions and other United Nations offices; United Nations information centres; and United Nations depository libraries. Internal distribution lists are also established for publications; they include permanent missions; permanent observers; press; Secretariat staff; and meetings and conference-servicing requirements. The current distribution chart at United Nations Headquarters is contained in the appendix to the present report.

30. In addition to the free distribution to official recipients, substantive departments of the Secretariat also maintain lists for distribution of their publications to specifically targeted end-users. According to current guidelines, these lists may also include persons or bodies that have rendered specific service in the preparation of the publication, persons or organizations that are of continuing and substantial assistance to the work of the department,

and persons of eminence in the field dealt with in the publication and whose interest it is considered important to enlist or retain. To avoid possible duplication with the list of official recipients and to ensure compliance with the criteria established by the Publications Board, all departmental lists are subject to examination by the Department of Public Information in consultation with the Office of Conference Services.

31. The review pointed to the need to rationalize the free distribution of publications and recommended that the Publications Board should establish limits to the number of copies of publications that could be distributed by author departments free of charge and guidelines for such free departmental distribution, so as to meet legitimate official needs for publications at the working level, while maintaining a potential for earning revenues through sales. The objectives of such guidelines should be to maximize sales and to minimize duplication in the distribution of documents. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that the United Nations has standard-setting responsibilities, and in certain cases, author departments have the responsibility to ensure that documents are made available free of charge to government ministries or offices that contributed to the preparation of the publication and need to use it in their work.

32. The review also recommended that there should be no official or free departmental distribution of sales publications that were previously issued as parliamentary documents. Free distribution of sales publications to NGOs should be limited to those organizations identified as targeted end-users by the author department concerned. These recommendations are under review by the Publications Board.

33. The number of copies of publications that are normally distributed to recipients is determined in accordance with a distribution chart established by the Publications Board. Language versions, when available, are provided according to the specific request of the recipient. Each year permanent missions are requested to review their requirements for the distribution of documents and publications. Publications sent to permanent missions are intended not only for the missions but for all interested ministries and government offices as well.

34. At Headquarters, a "Daily list of documents distributed at Headquarters" is compiled and issued by the Office of Conference Services so that its recipients can check the list of documents issued daily, ensure that what they receive is in conformity with their requests, and request any documents that they do not receive in full series.

35. The Distribution Section of the Office of Conference Services at Headquarters or the equivalent unit at other duty stations will continue to be responsible for the initial distribution of United Nations publications. Although the Publishing Division of the Office of Conference Services has been abolished, the Office has retained responsibility for the distribution of documentation and publications.

36. Distribution lists, both official and departmental, are being computerized and will be reviewed and updated at more frequent intervals - perhaps annually -

by author departments, the Office of Conference Services and the Department of Public Information.

37. During 1993, the Publications Board will revise Administrative Instruction ST/AI/189/Add.1/Rev.2 concerning the distribution of documents, meeting records, official records and publications, and in particular the distribution chart at Headquarters, contained in the appendix, with a view to reducing the number of copies of documents distributed.

38. The review recommended that for lengthy publications with extensive distribution, pre-packaging externally under contract should be considered. This recommendation was based upon an earlier proposal made by the Management Advisory Service during its review of the Office of Conference Services, that, with respect to the packaging and shipping functions, the option of contracting out the entire operations should be studied. Its costs and benefits should be compared with those of the in-house operations, bearing in mind that the latter could eventually benefit from the introduction of new technology and on-line automated equipment and methods, such as tipping in, insertion of coupons, addressing, sorting, bagging and boxing. The Publications Board endorsed the view that any decision to have the distribution of publications done externally under contract should be based upon a comparison with a computer-based internal operation. It did not favour having distribution of all publications and documents done externally without such a study.

B. Sales of United Nations publications

1. Criteria for selection of sales publications

39. The decision on whether or not a study should be published is made at two stages. First, if a programme seems likely to result in studies which would meet the established criteria for publications, tentative provision for publication is included in the programme budget. Secondly, when the study is completed, it is subject to critical review before it is certified by the department concerned as suitable for publication. The certification indicates the degree of interest likely to be shown by Governments, professional and academic groups and the general public.

40. At the second stage, a decision is made on whether the study is to be a sales or non-sales publication; not all publications are considered suitable for sale. The form of publication is a matter for administrative decision based on considerations of economy and of estimated sales potential. Several cases may be distinguished:

(a) If the study is being issued as a document of an intergovernmental body, it is given general distribution, which in itself constitutes publication and assures the official distribution that separate publication would provide. Such a document is not normally reissued as a publication. Departmental and sales distribution to the extent required is provided for by run-on copies. In appropriate cases, covers and title pages or self covers are provided.

(b) If the study meets the criteria for publication but is not to be presented to an intergovernmental body, if the main purpose of publication is to

bring the study to the attention of official and departmental recipients and if sales interest is expected to be minimal, then the study is issued as a non-sales item. The author unit assumes the main responsibility for getting the publication into the hands of the readership sought through departmental distribution.

(c) If the study is considered to have a substantial sales potential and if it meets the criteria for publication, it is issued as a United Nations publication with a sales number and sales price. If only a minimal sales interest is expected, the study is not normally issued as a sales publication.

(d) If the study meets the criteria for publication but is considered by the Sales Section to have a minimal sales potential, the possibility of external publication is considered.

41. The review of the publications policy found that the above criteria for the selection of sales publications continued to be appropriate. However, it was recognized that new mechanisms and/or procedures might enhance the process of reviewing manuscripts to ensure fulfilment of the above criteria, as well as those set out in General Assembly resolution 47/73 B. Moreover, the "minimal" sales figure would need to be established on a case-by-case basis. There should be no arbitrary minimum figure; the assessment of whether the number of copies expected to be sold is sufficient should take into consideration the nature of the publication, the characteristics of the market for such a publication and the proposed sales price.

2. Pricing policy

42. Paragraph .061 of section 11.06 of the United Nations Finance manual states that:

> "Through the sale of publications the United Nations makes available for general distribution documents, reports, books, periodicals, microforms and other published material at no cost to the Organization. The sales operation as a whole is intended to provide a profit to the Organization if this can be achieved without adversely affecting the dissemination of information to the public."

United Nations publications are issued primarily for official use and, as such, are distributed free of charge in varying quantities to Governments, intergovernmental agencies, NGOs, information media, individual authorities on the subjects treated and to United Nations depository libraries. They are also made generally available on the grounds that the public has a right to know what is being said and done in its name and to use the information and ideas so disseminated.

43. Publications are not planned or issued primarily with a view to revenue. Nevertheless, mindful of recommendation 34 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, the Publications Board has sought to establish a pricing policy that will maximize the revenue from the sale of publications to the extent consistent with ensuring their wide dissemination.

Under the recently revised rules for the pricing of United Nations publications, prices are no longer based solely on printing costs, but also take into account other costs, such as marketing, design and editing, as well as market and industry circumstances and the quality and content of the publication, from the viewpoint of market appeal. To make United Nations publications more accessible to readers in developing countries, flexibility is also built into the revised pricing policy and consideration is given to currency exchange rates and other elements affecting their ability to pay.

3. Role of the Publications Board

44. Upon the recommendation of the Sales Section and the author department, the Publications Board decides which publications will be included in the publications programme and issued as sales publications. The Board also decides upon policies related to sales activities, including the criteria for the selection of sales publications and pricing policies. Special measures to promote a small number of publications with unusually good potential markets are also proposed.

4. Role of the Sales Section (New York/Geneva)

45. In close consultation with author departments, the Sales Section (at Headquarters or at Geneva) proposes publications for issuance as sales publications, identifies prospective markets for the publications and proposes print runs and languages of publication. In consultation with author departments and with graphic designers, the Sales Section proposes repackaging of documents as sales publications or the creation of new products as well as the design and production of covers for sales publications. Production and distribution of sales publications are monitored by the Sales Section.

46. The Sales Section is also responsible for the promotion and marketing of sales publications, payment of expenditures related to sales activities, accounting for costs of goods sold and for revenues from sales, as well as for the operation of the United Nations bookshop.

47. The review recommended that the Sales Section, in consultation with author departments, should conduct regular surveys to assess the value of United Nations sales publications to the target readerships. The results of such surveys should be made known to the Publications Board and to author departments so as to enable both to utilize the information to improve their publications programme. As a pilot project, the Publications Board has requested the Sales Section and the Department of Public Information jointly to undertake an evaluation and market survey of the UN Chronicle. On the basis of the experience gained during this pilot project, systematic marketing studies will be made of other recurrent publications.

48. There is a need to strengthen the marketing activities of the Sales Section. The review of the Office of Conference Services carried out in 1992 recommended the following activities:

(a) Strengthening of the marketing and sales activities of the Publications Division and formulation of a three-year plan based on market analysis and readership surveys;

(b) Strengthening of the market research and evaluation function within the Sales Section with respect to the usefulness and effectiveness of publications. Departments should be encouraged to systematically assess the satisfaction of users as part of self-evaluation mechanisms;

(c) With an improved capacity to conduct marketing studies, providing valuable inputs in the initial planning stage of publications based on the requirements of target audiences and market demands, which would clearly help enhance the saleability and marketability of products.

The Publications Board endorsed the above recommendations. They are being considered further in the context of the transfer of the Sales Section from the Office of Conference Services to the Office of General Services, in order to draw upon the experience of the Office of General Services and, in particular, of the United Nations Postal Administration.

5. Treatment of revenues from the sale of publications

49. The programme budget of the United Nations includes information on the estimates of gross revenues and expenditures from the sale of United Nations publications as well as the net revenue from the activity. The net revenue from the activity accrues as miscellaneous income to the Organization and is administered in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

50. As new markets for United Nations publications are identified, and as publishing activities expand to cover new products, there is a need to devote more resources to product development activities. While such activities can significantly increase prospects for revenues, the revenues may not be generated during the biennium in which product development expenditures are incurred. For this reason, during the review of publications policy and practice, consideration was given to the possibility of providing resources to finance publication activities not funded under available regular budget resources. Resources would be used to ensure that a portion of the proceeds from the sale of publications would be made available for product development and other activities that would increase sales revenue, such as the more active promotion of publications, increasing the dissemination of publications, improving the quality of publications to enhance their market appeal, or improving the efficiency with which publications are prepared, processed, reproduced or distributed. The Publications Board agreed that it would be desirable to have resources provided for what might be termed "product development" activities relating to the preparation and promotion of new publications and assistance to author departments to make further improvements in already successful publications in order to improve prospects for revenue-generation. It proposed an increase in the regular budget provisions for the cost of goods sold to cover these developments, as well as promotional activities, in addition to the regular costs of producing goods for sale during the biennium.

C. External publishing activities

51. In order to achieve the widest possible dissemination, in as many languages as possible, of material relating to the work of the United Nations, external publishing arrangements in the form of co-publishing with, or the assignment of certain publishing rights to, external publishers - public or private - are considered when it appears likely that such arrangements will offer advantages to the Organization.

52. As a general rule, the United Nations publishes official records and well-established recurrent publications under its own imprint. However, proposals for external publishing, in whole or in part, are not excluded, if special circumstances can be adduced. Other texts, including those relating to special meetings or conferences, may also be proposed for external publication.

53. Within these general guidelines, proposals for an appropriate form of external publishing are considered for cases such as the following:

(a) Manuscripts not included in the approved United Nations publication programme and language editions of United Nations publications that the Organization does not plan to publish;

(b) Manuscripts in the approved United Nations publications programme, when it appears likely that some form of external publishing will achieve greater dissemination of information or economy of resources;

(c) Manuscripts developed from United Nations documentation expressly for the purpose of dissemination of information;

(d) Reprinting or publishing in other editions - whether in paper copy or in microform - to meet public demand.

54. Internal and external aspects of publishing are considered complementary and are, whenever possible, planned within the framework of annual programmes, rather than on a case-by-case basis. Pre-publication planning is undertaken at all levels, particularly by the author department. In consultation with the External Publications Officer, author departments review their proposed publishing plans and submit their recommendations for external publishing projects to the Publications Board, together with their proposed United Nations publications programme.

55. Proposals for external publishing are considered in the first instance by the Working Committee, which reports on them to the Publications Board. The Board decides on each proposal on its own merits, bearing in mind the following principles:

(a) The fulfilment by the Organization of its obligations for official distribution should not be inhibited;

(b) The financial self-sufficiency of the United Nations sales operation should not be impaired.

56. Experience has shown that there are cases in which a publication, even though not specifically mandated, might respond to a strong demand for information on a timely topic and thus generate revenues and bring other benefits to the Organization. In cooperation with author departments, the External Publications and Publishing Activities Office has in the past two years begun to develop publications to meet such demand and to cooperate with book packagers or book producers to undertake such projects outside the established publication programme. Similar to film producers in their operation, book packagers can carry out the full range of activities required to create and distribute a publication. On the basis of experience gained through pilot projects, procedures are being developed for using the services of book packagers to complement other external publishing activities and to create new titles for which there is a demand but for which regular budget resources are not available.

D. Copyright

57. In the past, the United Nations policy was, in general, not to seek copyright for United Nations publications, in order to facilitate the widest possible dissemination of their contents. However, experience over the years suggested a need to retain control over certain United Nations materials to ensure that they were used in the best interests of the Organization or to protect the revenues that might accrue from sales publications and that would be adversely affected by unauthorized, competitive commercial publications. Therefore, in 1987, the policy was revised on an experimental basis.

58. Certain categories of materials remain in the public domain. The United Nations does not seek copyright for them unless, prior to their issue and in exceptional circumstances, the Publications Board, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, decides otherwise. These categories are as follows:

(a) Official records: a series of printed publications relating to the proceedings of organs or conferences of the United Nations;

(b) United Nations documents: written material officially issued under a United Nations document symbol, regardless of the form of production, although, in practice the term is applied mainly to material offset from typescript and issued under a masthead. The term also applies to written material issued simultaneously or sequentially in the form of documents and publications;

(c) Public information material: publications, periodicals, brochures, pamphlets, press releases, flyers, catalogues and other materials designed primarily to inform the public about United Nations activities. This does not include public information material that is offered for sale, which may be subject to copyright registration.

59. Copyright protection is, as a general rule, now sought for all recurrent publications, studies or reports issued under the authority of the Publications Board. In exceptional circumstances, author departments may seek the concurrence of the Publications Board to obtain copyright protection for a publication in one of the categories listed in paragraph 58 above. Copyright protection will not be sought for publications, the legislative authority for

which contemplates the retention of the material in the public domain. The present experimental policy on copyright protection will be continued and adjusted as necessary to reflect developments of the law concerning the copyright of materials in electronic format.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

60. The restructuring of the publishing activities at Headquarters is expected to provide a new focus to the planning and implementation of the publications programme of the United Nations and to integrate it more closely with the other public information activities of the Organization. The Department of Public Information, rather than the Office of Conference Services, is now responsible for the planning and implementation of the publications programme and will bring its expertise to bear on the continuing analysis of the demand for publications and the effectiveness of publications in responding to that demand through a variety of evaluation techniques and contact with the public. The Office of General Services has taken over from the Office of Conference Services responsibility for all activities related to the sale of United Nations publications, as well as responsibility for the operation of the United Nations bookshop. It has also taken over responsibility for all contracting of external services related to the graphic design, typesetting, printing and binding of publications and documents as part of its overall responsibility for commercial services.

61. The reconstituted Publications Board in its review of the publications programme for 1994-1995 has been applying the modified criteria for publications set out above and seeking to take fully into account the concerns expressed during deliberations in the Committee on Information and in the General Assembly. It is hoped that the publications programme, as reflected in the programme budget proposals for the biennium 1994-1995, will fully respond to the requirements of Member States and will make a constructive contribution to the work of the Organization.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/46/7).

2/ See A/39/239.

Appendix

DISTRIBUTION CHART AT HEADQUARTERS

RECIPIENTS	DOCUMENTS AND MEETING RECORDS				OFFICIAL RECORDS		UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS	
	General	*Limited*	*Restricted*	*Provisional*[a]	*Verbatim records fascicles annex fascicles supplements bound summary records*	*Bound verbatim records bound annex fascicles*	*All publications with sales number except yearbooks*	*Yearbooks*[b]
MINISTRIES, EMBASSIES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ADDRESSES	10[c]	0	0	0	10[c]	0	See note[d]	See note[d]
INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	5	0	0	0	5	0	1	1
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS — CATEGORY I	5	0	0	1 upon request	5	0	3	1
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS — CATEGORY II AND ROSTER	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES	25[e]	Upon request	Upon request	Upon request	25[e]	1	30	5
UN OFFICE AT GENEVA, UN OFFICE AT VIENNA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS, UNEP, UN CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, UNCTAD AND UNU	IAWR	Reference copies only	Reference copies only	Upon request	IAWR	5	IAWR	IAWR
INFORMATION CENTRES	IAWR	0	0	Upon request	IAWR	1	IAWR	IAWR
DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
PERMANENT MISSIONS	IAWR	IAWR[f]	IAWR[g]	IAWR	IAWR	1	30[d]	5[d]
PERMANENT OBSERVERS	5[h]	See note[i]	0	Upon request	5	1	5	2
PRESS	IAWR	Reference copies only	0	Upon request from DPI	IAWR	1	IAWR	Reference copy only
SECRETARIAT, HEADQUARTERS	IAWR	See note[j]	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR	Reference copies	IAWR	IAWR
MEETING SERVICE AND CONFERENCE REQUIREMENTS	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR	0	IAWR	IAWR
SALES	See note[k]	0	0	0	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR	IAWR
STOCK	IAWR	Minimum	Retained by departments	Minimum	IAWR	Minimum	IAWR	IAWR

Notes:

IAWR — In accordance with requirements

[a] Except in cases where distribution is explicitly limited to participants in a given meeting

[b] Excluding the *Yearbook of the United Nations*

[c] A maximum of 25 copies may be provided upon written request

[d] The number of copies given for permanent missions represents the combined total entitlement for permanent missions, ministries and other governmental agencies

[e] Additional copies up to a maximum of 25 copies of specific documents and official records may be provided on request

[f] A maximum of 10 copies may be provided to the members of the body concerned

[g] Does not pertain to the "Restricted" documents withheld from regular distribution by the body concerned

[h] More copies may be provided upon written request

[i] Observers participating in the work of the body concerned may receive up to 3 copies

[j] As certified by the executive officer of each department or office

[k] Only to paid subscribers for designated series

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

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3 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Fifteenth session
10-28 May 1993

SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

CONTINUOUS AND MAJOR PUBLICATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In paragraph 2 (e) of resolution 47/73 B of 14 December 1992, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit "a report on the continuous and major publications to the Committee on Information at its fifteenth session, providing the following details:

"(a) The list of publications and their circulation figures;

"(b) Their cost;

"(c) The original language versions and the languages into which the publications were translated;

"(d) Target audiences, including, where possible, the intended end-use of the specific products".

2. The Department of Public Information produces and distributes several continuous and major publications in pursuance of its mandate "to promote ... an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world" 1/ and in response to subsequent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. These publications cover the major issues before the United Nations and are intended to promote the principles and purposes, as well as to contribute to the implementation of particular programme objectives mandated by the General Assembly.

3. The Department's continuous and major publications are financed exclusively through the regular budget, except for Development Business, which is financed from extrabudgetary funds and for Africa Recovery, which is partially financed from extrabudgetary funds.

4. The question of estimating the total cost of the publications of the United Nations, including staff costs related to the preparation and drafting of such publications, has been a matter of concern to Member States and to the Secretariat for many years. A complete and accurate costing of the publications of the Organization would provide very useful information to Member States, particularly in the context of consideration and adoption of the programme budgets and would also be a most important management tool. While efforts have been made in this direction, considerable methodological problems remain unsolved. These include the absence of a practical, accurate and cost-effective mechanism for capturing the time actually devoted to specific publications by staff engaged in related research and drafting.

5. The cost estimates included in this document are restricted solely to production costs incurred by the Department of Public Information and its estimated staff costs in the preparation of the publications covered. The production costs include external printing, contractual services or temporary staff. Not included in these estimates are the costs of staff time in other departments, including language services, and other costs and services of other departments, such as internal reproduction. The estimates should therefore be considered as tentative and partial.

6. The Department's continuous and major publications are described below in subparagraphs (a) to (m). Cost figures for the Department of Public Information are given for identifiable direct costs, such as external printing and external translation as well as for estimated internal costs attributable to the preparation and production of the publications within the Department. Preparation and production activities by the Department include planning, commissioning of manuscripts, data and photo research, drafting, editing, copy preparation, typesetting and proofreading, design, distribution and associated administrative functions.

(a) Africa Recovery

This is a quarterly magazine devoted to promoting global awareness of the critical economic situation in Africa and of the needed strategies for action. The 36-page publication is illustrated with photos and graphs. Targeted audiences include the media, representatives of development agencies, business leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the academic community, and policy-makers on Africa at multilateral and bilateral levels. It is produced in English (23,000 copies) and French (8,000 copies) and is the sole responsibility of the Africa Recovery Unit (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, and 4 General Service posts). Estimated production and staff costs for the four issues released in 1992 in English and French amounted to US$ 514,000 (including costs for temporary drafting and editorial assistance of US$ 31,000; for external translation of US$ 16,000; and for external printing of US$ 82,000). A significant part of this figure is borne by the Trust Fund for Information Support for African Economic Recovery and Development, which receives extrabudgetary contributions from Member States and from United Nations agencies.

In the light of that, the General Assembly stressed the importance of the Fund and invited the Secretary-General to mobilize resources for it. 2/ The balance available in the Trust Fund as of 31 December 1992 was US$ 230,000. Annual subscriptions have recently been instituted and are available to

individuals for US$ 20 and to institutions for US$ 35. Currently, the publication has a paid subscription base of only 84 (25 individual and 59 institutional subscribers), but it should be kept in mind that its main purpose is advocacy and not profit.

(b) Development Business

This biweekly publication was launched in 1978 by the Department of Public Information in accordance with agreements reached with the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and, in 1992, with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Development Business was established as an income supplement to Development Forum 3/ and as a service to the development banks and their member States. It is the only publication permitted to print official procurement information from all the major development banks and bank borrowers are required by regulation to publish their invitations to bid on bank projects in Development Business.

Development Business sells for US$ 395 a year for 24 issues. Each issue consists of a 24- to 32-page publication and a separate 40- to 56-page summary of pending bank projects. The developing and developed country companies/consultants that subscribe to Development Business use it to monitor and participate in international competitive bidding on development bank- and United Nations-funded projects. United Nations and development bank officials read it to track project activity.

In addition to the publication itself, Development Business offers its subscribers access to an on-line computer and telex service, called Scan-A-Bid, for those who want to receive project and bidding information faster. A one-year subscription to Scan-A-Bid costs US$ 960.

In 1992, the Development Business print run averaged 4,500 copies per issue. The publication is produced primarily in English but it contains sections in French and Spanish. It is the sole responsibility of the Development Business Unit (1 P-4, 9 General Service posts). Production costs for the 24 issues released in 1992 amounted to US$ 991,000, including US$ 62,500 for external printing. About 4,300 copies of each issue were mailed in 1992, including bulk subscriptions. Currently, there are 3,200 paying subscribers.

Development Business has generated a surplus of income over expenditure since its creation and it continues to be self-supporting. Total income earned by Development Business for 1992 amounted to US$ 1,220,000. The net income is paid back to the Development Forum Trust Fund against which the expenditure is charged and which had a deficit. As of 31 December 1992, the Fund balance amounted to US$ 45,000. Development Business subscription income for the first quarter of 1993 is running at 28 per cent above the level for the same period last year.

(c) UN Chronicle

This is the official quarterly magazine of the United Nations covering action by political and other legislative bodies of the Organization, including the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as current developments throughout the United Nations system. Four issues are published annually, with

each issue averaging 84 pages. Targeted audiences include students, teachers and professors, other patrons of public school and university libraries, representatives of NGOs, and government officials. It is published in Arabic (2,000 copies), Chinese (5,000 copies), English (13,050 copies), French (4,200 copies), Russian (2,000 copies) and Spanish (1,100 copies). The English, French and Spanish versions are produced internally, except for the cover. The Arabic edition is translated and typeset in Cairo, and printed in New York internally. The Chinese and Russian versions are translated, printed and distributed by contractors in Beijing and Moscow, respectively.

Estimated production and staff costs for the four issues released in 1992 in these six languages amounted to US$ 749,000 (including external translation costs of US$ 100,000, external printing costs of US$ 98,000, design and artwork of US$ 14,000, temporary drafting assistance of US$ 2,000 and related operational costs of US$ 23,500). Production of the UN Chronicle is the sole responsibility of the UN Chronicle Unit (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 4 General Service posts). Subscriptions are available for US$ 20; the publication has a paid subscription base of approximately 5,800. Individual sales at US$ 8.50 a copy totalled 3,165 in 1992. Both subscriptions and individual sales produced a total estimated revenue of US$ 179,000, which is credited to income section 3 of the United Nations regular budget.

(d) Yearbook of the United Nations

This publication is the major reference work covering the activities of the United Nations and its common system during each calendar year. It provides detailed information on political and security, economic and social, trusteeship and decolonization, legal, administrative and budgetary questions, as well as on the work of each related organization in the common system and is the sole responsibility of the UN Yearbook Unit (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 P-2 and 5 General Service posts). The targeted audiences include government officials, researchers, teachers, students, NGOs and academic institutions. It is published in English (8,000 copies) by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, the Netherlands. All costs for printing and distribution are borne by the external publisher. Estimated staff costs for the 1987 edition (1,431 pages) released in 1992 amounted to US$ 918,000. The publisher hired and paid the freelance writers for the 1987 edition at a cost of US$ 7,000. Estimated staff costs for the 1991 edition (1,124 pages) released in 1992, amounted to US$ 697,000. The sales price for the 1987 and the 1991 edition is US$ 105 and US$ 115, respectively. The Department received 900 copies of the 1987 edition and 930 copies of the 1991 edition for free distribution to permanent missions, permanent observer missions, United Nations depositary libraries, United Nations information centres and services, and other United Nations offices. Sales of the publication produced a total estimated revenue for the 1987 edition of US$ 112,000 and for the 1991 edition of US$ 121,000, credited to income section 3 of the United Nations regular budget. Production of the issues for 1988, 1989 and 1990 has still to be implemented. The 1988 and 1992 issues will be published in 1993, the 1989 and 1993 issues in 1994, and the 1990 and 1994 issues in 1995, thus eliminating the backlog.

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Targeted audiences of the Secretary-General's annual report to the General Assembly include government officials, eminent persons, representatives of NGOs, media and the academic community. It is produced in English (15,000 copies), French and Spanish (3,000 copies each). Estimated staff costs attributable to the Department for the edition (78 pages) in the three languages amounted to US$ 36,000 (including costs for translation and indexing of US$ 20,000). Costs for external printing amounted to US$ 35,000, bringing the total estimated costs of the publication to US$ 71,000. With the assistance of United Nations information centres and their local partners, the publication was also released in Bangla, Dutch, German and Japanese. It was not possible to estimate the costs for these activities. The publication is not a sales item.

(f) Notes for Speakers

This publication is a tool to assist persons who prepare presentations about key issues before the Organization. The annual publication, released prior to United Nations Day in October, assembles in a suitable format information about topical activities of the United Nations. Targeted audiences are teachers, students and NGOs, as well as United Nations staff. It is published in English (15,000 copies), French and Spanish (5,000 copies each). Estimated production and staff costs for the edition released in 1992 totalled US$ 103,000 (costs for external printing amounted to US$ 50,000 and for external translation to US$ 12,000). The publication is distributed mainly through United Nations information centres and services as well as through the Department's NGO Liaison Service. It is not a sales item.

(g) Objective: Justice

This is a biannual review dedicated to the promotion of justice through self-determination, the elimination of apartheid and racial discrimination and the advancement of human rights. Targeted audiences include NGOs, media and educational institutions. It is published in English only (5,000 copies). The edition released in 1992 has 45 pages and its estimated production and staff costs amounted to US$ 22,000. The publication is printed internally. The sales price is US$ 5. Reported sales were of 235 copies (including the paid subscription base of 138) for a total of US$ 1,175. Even if the purpose of the publication is advocacy and not profit, it is not clear how many copies are actually read, and the future of Objective: Justice is currently under review by the Department.

(h) World Media Handbook

This is a reference tool presented in a directory format, published biennially since 1990. It provides a summary of selected data on print and broadcasting media, academic institutions related to communications and journalistic professional associations covering countries around the world. It has been honoured by several professional associations. It is published in English only (5,700 copies). Targeted audiences are information professionals and media practitioners within the United Nations system and other organizations, representatives of the media and representatives of related institutions. Estimated production and staff costs for the edition released in

1992 amounted to US$ 132,000 (including costs for external printing of the four-coloured cover of US$ 4,000); the 504-page publication was printed internally. The sales price is US$ 65. As of 1 March 1993, 596 copies were sold for a total of US$ 39,000. Since updating the publication will cost less than producing it, costs should diminish, while it is hoped that the professional world will find it useful and the readership will increase.

(i) UN in Brief

This continually updated, illustrated 20-page pamphlet provides general information about the United Nations, its principal organs and major activities. The publication was initiated in response to growing demands for succinct information in a handy format. Targeted audiences are students and the public at large. It is published in English (30,000 copies), French and Spanish (20,000 copies each). Estimated production and staff costs of the edition released in 1992 amounted to US$ 31,000 (including costs for external printing of US$ 20,000). The publication is not a sales item.

(j) United Nations Film and Video Catalogue

This is a biennial illustrated reference book that has been published since 1964 to promote film and video productions of the Department. It provides succinct information and data on available films, videos, photo and archival film footage, and on the United Nations regional film libraries in 124 countries. Audiences are national television and cable broadcasters, representatives of NGOs, educational institutions and government offices. It is published in English (10,000 copies) and French (5,000 copies) Estimated production and staff costs for the 71-page English edition released in 1992 amounted to US$ 89,000 (including US$ 40,000 for external printing); the French version will be printed internally in 1993. The publication is not a sales item.

(k) Basic Facts about the United Nations

This is a reference book containing a brief description of the work of the United Nations and its agencies on major issues before the Organization. Targeted audiences are NGOs, educational institutions, teachers and students. It is published in English (65,000 copies), French and Spanish (10,000 copies each) and distributed through United Nations offices and bookstores (sales price US$ 5). The latest edition was issued in 1990 (236 pages), and an updated edition is intended for release during the third quarter of 1993.

(l) Everyone's United Nations

This is a concise historical account of the United Nations and the activities of the common system. It is regularly updated and reissued. Targeted audiences include government officials, NGOs, media, educational and research institutions, and library patrons. The latest edition (484 pages) was published in 1986 in English only (28,200 copies). Sales prices for the cloth-bound version and the paperback version were US$ 14.95 and US$ 9.95, respectively. The next edition of the publication is planned for release in 1993.

(m) Image and Reality

This is a booklet that provides factual information on the United Nations at work and the achievements of the Organization, and serves as a tool to foster an informed understanding of the role of the United Nations. Targeted audiences include opinion-makers, representatives of the media, NGOs, educational institutions and the business community. It is published in English (100,000 copies), French and Spanish (15,000 copies each). The latest edition (43 pages) was published in 1986. The next edition is scheduled for release in 1994.

7. In addition, the Department releases a large number of publications on specific and topical issues of major concern to the international community, such as peacemaking, peace-keeping, the struggle against apartheid, the question of Palestine, human rights in all its aspects, humanitarian issues, women, sustainable economic and social development and environmental protection. 4/ The targeted audiences vary according to the subject matter, but they are usually policy- and opinion-makers, particularly in government institutions, NGOs and the media. Audiences are reached through established and regularly updated mailing lists maintained both at Headquarters and by the network of United Nations information centres, services and other information components in the field. These publications are not for sale, and individual cost factors are difficult to quantify. The Department will evaluate these publications and the philosophy behind them, starting in 1993.

8. The publication activities of the Department endeavour to take into account new and changing priorities. These new priorities and demands on the Department call for a dynamic approach that is sufficiently flexible but that meets the varying information needs of the diverse audiences around the world. In particular, the Department has been making efforts to respond to the increased media and public interest in United Nations peace-keeping and peacemaking activities by preparing and disseminating relevant information materials.

9. Publications of the Department are distributed free of charge to United Nations information centres and services, regional commissions and other United Nations offices in the field, representatives of intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, media and research organizations, United Nations depository libraries and government offices. Reference copies of these publications are also sent to permanent missions and permanent observer missions at Headquarters. Some publications by the Department are available for sale through the Sales Section of the Office of Conference Services. These publications include: the Yearbook of the United Nations, UN Chronicle, Basic Facts about the United Nations, Everyone's United Nations, Objective: Justice, and World Media Handbook.

10. Most of the publications are distributed from United Nations Headquarters to all United Nations offices by diplomatic pouch or by special carriers. The average costs for mailing publications world wide are approximately US$ 0.50 per pound by regular pouch and US$ 0.75 per pound by first-class pouch. Charges for parcel services through special couriers are approximately US$ 1.75 per pound. More than 2 million copies of publications have been distributed in 1992, in addition to statements and messages by the Secretary-General, parliamentary documents, and press releases. For 1992, costs for distribution of information

material amounted to US$ 256,000 (including costs for pouches, special couriers and other related services). In the light of this, and mindful of the need to ensure timely delivery which could well define the usefulness of the publications, budgetary allocations for major and continuous publications should, in all instances, include resources for distribution as well. This issue will be tackled in the programme and budget submission for the biennium 1994-1995.

11. In order to enhance the circulation of its publications, the United Nations has employed various promotional and advertising methods, including: placement of advertisements (often unpaid) in newspapers or journals; participation in book fairs and promotional exhibits; and issuing brochures targeted for special audiences. Efforts are directed towards both the subscribers and the general readership.

12. As reflected in the present report, the Department has a high level of investment in the production of its publications indicating the need to re-evaluate the utilization of human and budgetary resources against the usefulness and value of the products to both their intended readership and to the United Nations. This re-evaluation effort is currently undertaken by the Department of Public Information, which would greatly value the input and observations of the Committee.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946.

2/ General Assembly resolution 46/185 C, sect. XXII, para. 1.

3/ Development Forum, published since 1972, was a 16-page journal devoted to issues relating to economic and social development. Production costs for the five issues released in 1992 in English (10,000 copies), French (5,000 copies), and Spanish (4,000 copies), amounted to US$ 44,500 (external printing of US$ 28,500 and translation of US$ 16,000). In view of its financial situation and the budgetary constraints which prevented an increase in the annual subvention from the United Nations regular budget, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) at its meeting on 9 December 1992 agreed to cease its publication by 31 December 1992. A recommendation to this effect was included in the report on the performance of Development Forum (A/CN.1/R.1162) of 4 November 1992 submitted at the request of ACABQ.

4/ In 1992, the Department released 152 books, booklets, pamphlets, backgrounders and posters on these issues (many of them in all official languages). The publications include among others: "An Agenda for Peace"; "Declaration of the Right of Peoples to Peace"; "World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons"; "Information kit on Ageing"; "Information kit on Disability"; "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women"; "Women: Vulnerable Victims of AIDS"; "Ending Discrimination: A Fundamental Right"; "Women in Developing Countries - Victims of Economic Crisis"; "The United Nations and Drug Abuse Control"; "Women Facing Industrialization"; "Earth Summit UN Focus No. 1: Women, Environment and Development: Sustaining our common future"; "Convention on the Rights of the Child"; "Decolonization: the task ahead"; "UNCED Earth Summit - In Our Hands";

"Teaching about Environment and Development"; "Women: Challenges to the Year 2000"; "UN Social Agenda No. 6"; "Agreements on Political Settlements of the Cambodia Conflict"; "UN Focus: Women and Environment - Partners for Life"; "Life of the Palestinian under Israeli Occupation"; "United Nations Conference on Environment and Development"; "Security Council Summit Session"; "The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons: A Decade of Accomplishment"; "The Path to Peace: El Salvador Agreements"; "UNTAC Press Kit/Fact Sheet"; "United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia"; "ONUSAL in El Salvador"; "UN in Action"; "Student Leaflet 1992 on Natural Disasters"; "Rio Declaration and Forest Principles"; "Helsinki Transcript - Prospect for Peace in the Middle East"; "International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples"; "World Economy Survey"; "UN Focus: UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR)"; "UN Focus: United Nations Verification Mission in Angola"; "Childhood Disability: Five decades of action"; "World Conference on Human Rights"; "UN Mechanisms to Protect Human Rights"; "Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance"; "UN Focus: Apartheid - South Africa"; "Indigenous Peoples. Environment and Development"; "Press Summary of Agenda 21"; "Convention on Climate Change"; "For the Rights of the Palestinian"; "UN and the situation in Former Yugoslavia"; "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era"; "The Declaration of the Alma-Ata Conference (Pluralism in Print Media)"; "The UN and the Situation in Somalia".